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TAGS: [ECON](#) [KU](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [KTFN](#)  
SUBJECT: C-SA9-01527: MOST PAKISTANI AND AFGHAN WORKERS IN  
KUWAIT TOO POOR TO SUPPORT EXTREMISTS

REF: SECSTATE 71311

Classified By: CDA Tom Williams for reasons 1.4 b and d

11. (U) The below responses are keyed to reftel questions.
12. (C) "How much money do expatriates send back to their home country in annual remittances?" According to Pakistani Embassy Labor Attach Rabnawaz Khan, unskilled laborers (who make up the vast majority of Pakistani workers in Kuwait) earn around 40 to 50 Kuwaiti Dinar (USD 140 to 175) a month and send home, at most, around 20 to 30 KD (USD 70 to 105) a month -- much of which often goes to repaying back the debt the worker's family incurred to purchase his residency visa for Kuwait. (Note: recruiting agents in Pakistan sell Kuwaiti residency visas for the equivalent of USD 1,700 to 5,200, according to the Pakistani Embassy. End note.) Due to the high cost of living in Kuwait, it is not uncommon for unskilled laborers to struggle to break even and have no money to send home. Khan also estimated that only 10 percent of Pakistani workers are skilled workers; they earn approximately 200 KD a month or more. Embassy of Afghanistan Consul Aslam Wazeeri estimated that Afghan expatriates earn around 100 KD (USD 347) a month and send around 50 KD (USD 175) a month back to Afghanistan. Most are unskilled laborers, some workers have families, and some are business owners.
13. (C) "By what channels? How often?" According to Khan, many Pakistani expatriates use Hawala (a.k.a. Hundi), an informal banking system, to transfer money to Pakistan. Khan estimates that more than half of the expatriate workers in Kuwait use official money transfer services such as Western Union. (Comment: Given the high costs associated with using Western Union, we would consider Khan's assessment of wire transfer use as highly optimistic. End comment.) The GOP is seeking to curb the use of Hundis and has implemented a rewards card system which provides benefits to workers depending on how much in remittances they send back to Pakistan. Khan also stated that the GOK has outlawed Hundi transfers. Expats use Hundis because they are simple, requiring no reading or writing to initiate a transfer. There are many Hundi agents throughout Pakistan but there are only a few Western Unions, located primarily in the cities. Pakistani expats tend to distrust banks and view Hundis as more reliable. Wazeeri reported that rural Afghans, in contrast to rural Pakistanis, have access to and use branches of legitimate money transfer companies (like Western Union) rather than the Hawala or Hundi system. (Comment: We are similarly unconvinced of Wazeeri's estimate of the high use of official remittance channels given the high relative costs of using the same versus Hawala. End Comment.)

¶4. (S) "Does the host government monitor the money flows? If so, how?" The GOK does not track transfers under USD 10,000. Most of the Pakistani and Afghan workers' transfers are well under USD 10,000.

¶5. (C) "What are the methods whereby south Asians are recruited and/or radicalized by Gulf-based extremists?" Post has no evidence that Gulf-based extremists are recruiting south Asians in Kuwait.

¶6. (U) "Describe Afghan and Pakistani expats and local national donations to charities that may send money to Afghanistan or Pakistan." Kuwaiti charities receive millions of dollars in donations from Kuwaiti nationals and do not target the expatriate population for smaller contributions. Expats who give to charity likely send money to charities in their home country, but due to their limited income and debt, the amounts donated are usually very small.

¶7. (C) "Which charities might be associated with extremist groups, terrorists, or the Afghan or Pakistani governments?" In June 2008 the U.S. Treasury domestically designated Kuwait's Revival of Islamic Heritage Society (RIHS) under E.O. 13224 as a charity that provides financial and material support to Al-Qaeda (AQ) and its affiliates and simultaneously pursued a UNSCR 1267 designation, which remains pending. In its designation, U.S. Treasury linked RIHS to Laskar-e-Tayyiba (LET) elements in Pakistan. Post is not aware, however, of contacts between Afghan or Pakistani expats in Kuwait with LET or AQ.

¶8. (C) "Describe expat and local national donation levels to those charities. Which ones are most popular? Which ones are most suspected of having extremist, terrorist, or government ties?" Post has no evidence that south Asians in Kuwait are donating much to any charities, extremist, terrorist, governmental, or otherwise.

¶9. (U) "Please provide information on any charities run by Afghan and Pakistani expats." All charities in Kuwait are run by Kuwaitis.

¶10. (C) "How large is the population of Pakistani and Afghan expatriate workers in each gulf state?" The Pakistani Embassy estimated that 150,000 Pakistani expatriates are currently living in Kuwait, most of whom are manual laborers. The Afghan Embassy estimated there are around 20,000 Afghan expatriates in Kuwait: 15,678 registered and around 4,000 unregistered.

¶11. (C) "How many in the south Asian community are permanent residents?" None: Kuwaiti law does not allow for permanent residency.

¶12. (C) "How many are guest workers?" Almost all of the 150,000 Pakistani expatriates are workers. Approximately 90 percent are unskilled laborers and 10 percent are skilled. The Pakistani Embassy assessed that only the 10 percent of skilled laborers would have enough money to support a family in Kuwait. The unskilled laborers, families would remain in Pakistan. Most of the estimated 20,000 Afghan expatriates are workers. There are some Afghan families living here but they are in the minority. The majority of expatriates are unskilled laborers and cannot afford to bring their families with them.

¶13. (C) "What is their ethnic and, where appropriate, tribal/clan make-up?" Most Pakistani expatriates are poor and from the rural areas in the Northwest Frontier province and the Punjab. Most Afghan expats are poor and from rural areas.

¶14. (C) "What links do they have with political parties, insurgents or other extremists in Afghanistan or Pakistan?" Unknown.

¶15. (C) "Who are the key leaders within these communities?"

What prominent mosques or community organizations do these expatriates belong to? Describe the mosques, activities and relationship with the government, people, or extremists groups in Afghanistan or Pakistan. Do expats follow prominent Pakistani, Afghan, or Gulf clerics? If so, which ones, and why? Where did prominent clerical leaders receive their religious education and what school of thought do they look to for religious guidance (Deobandi, Bareilvi, Ahl-e Hadith, Salafi, etc.)? Describe clerics, political activities in Gulf States, Pakistan, or Afghanistan. Who are the most influential or wealthy businessmen in these communities? What types of business are they involved in? What links do the business leaders have with clerics or extremists at home? Describe any role they may play in raising, holding, or dispersing funds for the expat community." Unknown.

¶16. (C) "How do expats view the Taliban and other extremists in their home country? What aspects of these groups, platforms and activities do Pakistani and Afghan expatriates admire or reject?" Unknown.

¶17. (C) "How do expats view their governments in Kabul or Islamabad?" According to the Afghan Embassy, Afghan workers in Kuwait are looking forward to Afghanistan's August 20 election with interest. However, they will not be able to vote because the Afghan Embassy in Kuwait does not have the ability to accept absentee ballots.

¶18. (C) "Please describe any steps the host government has taken or plans it might have to monitor or influence these expat populations." Post sees little evidence of GOK outreach to these communities.

¶19. (S/NF) "To what extent are U.S. Embassies working with other third-country official personnel to gather information on and attempt to address this subject (i.e. the tracing and stemming of terrorist financing flows to insurgent groups in Afghanistan/Pakistan)?" Post maintains positive relations and shares information with third country officials as occasions to do so arise. For example, recently PolCouns received from his Afghan counterpart information on thousands of Arabs who potentially traveled for Jihad in Afghanistan. However, rarely does the issue arise of AF/PAK expats channeling funds for terror activities.

¶20. (C) "Please report on the types of media followed and/or participated in by Afghan and Pakistani expats in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States." According to the Pakistan Embassy, the Pakistani expatriate community has access to around seven channels from Pakistan through satellite. GEO TV is the most popular channel. According to the Afghan Embassy, the Afghan expatriate community has access to twelve channels from Afghanistan through satellite.

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WILLIAMS